

Kentucky Literacy Link

A Publication of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)

Inside this issue:

Spotlight: Thinking Stems 2.0—A Traditional Strategy Revamped	2
Vocabulary in CTE: Choose Your Words Carefully	3
Another Excellent Resource: AdLit.org	3
Technology Critique: Six Ed-Tech Tools for Social Studies Instruction	3
Great New Resources from KDE	4
Upcoming Literacy Events Around Kentucky	4
PD 360: Common Core in the Classroom	5
PBS Learning Media's "Inspiring Middle School Literacy"	5
Contact Information and Additional Resources	6

Volume 4, Issue 6

January 2014

How am I Going to Eat This Elephant?



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This year, along with my other stocking stuffers, my husband got me a cute little replica of Hermione's time turner from *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. Potterheads like myself know that Hermione, ever the dedicated student, used this device to relive hours each day in order to take extra classes. Of course, by the end of the book the poor girl was exhausted and on the verge of a complete emotional breakdown.

This is where I often find myself at

the start of a new year. This one is no different. Projects are piling up at work, I'm embarking on my last semester of doctoral coursework, and it's time to reflect and recommit to self-improvement. In the words of Allie Brosh's now-famous [memes](#), it's time to do ALL THE THINGS!

You, too, might be falling into this trap. The school year is half over, there are benchmarks to be met and dreaded high-stakes tests drawing nearer each day. How are you going to teach all the things?

Well, either you're going to collapse under the pressure or you're simply going to do what you can

each day. If you keep looking at the entire elephant – this overwhelming mountain of "stuff" to be done – you'll find yourself in a constant state of stress and anxiety. Under these conditions you're highly unlikely to do your best work.

Stop trying to eat the whole elephant today. It's not possible. That elephant took time to get that big and it's going to take time for you to eat him. (Seriously, I love this old proverb, but what a gross metaphor.)

Here's to taking it one bite at a time. Happy 2014!

Kentucky Department of Education Updates

State gets \$77 million in RTTT

The federal government awarded nearly \$77 million in Race to the Top grants to Kentucky educational entities last month. KY was among six winners of a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant to support early learning and development reform agendas. KY received \$44.3 million. The winning states, which will receive a combined \$280 million, must show a willingness to carry out sweeping improvements to programs focused on children from birth to age 5.

The Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative, a consortium of 18 rural districts, received about \$30 million for a plan that will expand distance learning and better train teachers to use technology.

For more information on the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Fund visit the [RTT-ELC website](#). The list of 2013 Race to

the Top-District (RTT-D) winners is attached and posted on the federal Department of Education's [website](#).

AP courses, AdvanceKentucky spell success for Kentucky students

Kentucky students who enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) courses in high school are better prepared for college, need little or no remediation, and perform better in their postsecondary studies than students who do not take AP classes, according to [data](#) released last month. The information affirms national evidence that shows a significant and positive long-term effect for students who take AP classes in high school.

A review of Kentucky data also shows that students who enroll in AP classes at high schools in the state that are part of the AdvanceKentucky initiative earn significantly more qualifying scores on AP

math, science and English exams, which can earn a student college credit, compared to students taking the same AP courses nationwide.

For the past five years, AdvanceKentucky, a statewide math and science initiative, has expanded access to, participation in and the success rate of Kentucky students taking AP classes, especially among those who are traditionally underserved and underrepresented in Advanced Placement courses. A total of 88 Kentucky high schools in 67 districts have participated in AdvanceKentucky since its inception in 2008; more than 2,500 pre-AP math, science and English teachers statewide have taken advantage of AdvanceKentucky's summer training program.

For more information, see the [press release](#).



Spotlight: Thinking Stems 2.0 – A Traditional Strategy Revamped

Bianca Nightengale-Lee is a Goal Clarity Coach at Wheatley Elementary in Jefferson County and is a repeat contributor to the Literacy Link.

Sarah Reed is a 3rd grade Teacher at Field Elementary and Beth Fuller is a Goal Clarity Coach at Carter Elementary, both in Jefferson County.

Throughout my career I've had the opportunity to attend numerous conferences. Many have ignited my vigor for teaching, however none have impacted me as profoundly as the Kentucky Reading Association 2013 conference that I attended with my cohort from the Kentucky Reading Project. There I was reintroduced to the strategy of Thinking Stems in a new and exciting way. Two exemplary educators shared their success utilizing stems as a systematic framework for supporting students.

The facilitators of the session, Sarah Reed and Beth Fuller, presented their work on using Thinking Stems in the elementary classroom. Though Thinking Stems (also known as sentence frames) have been commonly used for years, particularly with ELL students, the presenters decided to delve deeper into this concept to extract more meaning and depth. Though their expertise was impressive, even more inspiring was their level of dedication and commitment to helping others. After the conference, Sarah and Beth stayed an extra two hours to conference and coach other teachers.

Upon leaving the KRA conference my brain was buzzing with new ideas. My curiosity was piqued, and I had to know more. I contacted the ladies to discuss their ideas further. Little did I know what a large impact this modest meeting would have on me and my school.

Our next session took place at a local Starbucks. Sarah started by giving her back-



Sarah, Erin and Brandon work on stems.

ground with using the stems. In 2012, she worked on them with Field Elementary and J. B. Atkinson Academy for Excellence. Along with Principals Stephanie Nutter and Deborah Rivera, Sarah won a Gheens Institute for Innovation award. In 2013 Sarah teamed up with Beth, expanding thinking stems to encompass close reading, text dependent questioning, and text complexity—three major components of the Kentucky Core Academic standards.

I asked Sarah why she decided to invest in Thinking Stems. She replied that this strategy ensured all students could construct focused and developed answers to reading questions, both short answer and open response. Using answer stems helps to increase students' use of academic vocabulary and helps to internalize the language structures that expand a student's proficiency as a reader and writer. Sarah went on to explain that answer stems is the strategy teachers at her school use to scaffold and help students learn how to write focused, accurate answers that emphasize text based details, expressed in complete sentences.

As the hours passed and my tea ran cold, I was entranced by Sarah's unique adaptation. Through her research she developed a document called "Text Based Question Stems" (TBQ), which provides 5-15 question stems for each of the informational reading standards. This resource includes categories for each of the standards. These pinpoint the central focus of each TBQ relative to a specific standard. For example, informational reading standard 7: *integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats including visually and quantitatively as well as in words*, would fall under the "language knowledge" category because students would have to access both of these cognitive skills to master the standard. [Attached](#) is an example of one of Sarah's TBQ's.

As our meeting came to a close, I knew the conversation could not end here. I invited Sarah to meet with two teachers from my school, Wheatley Elementary. I wanted to see how they could adapt this framework to meet their students' needs. As a former resource teacher at Wheatley, Sarah wholeheartedly agreed to the partnership.

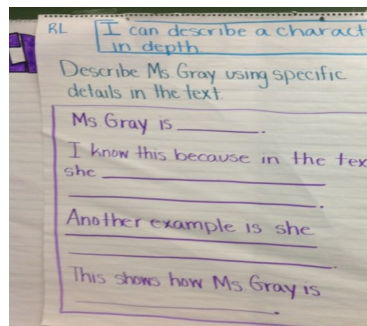
This phase of my exploration was the most exciting because I was able to see theory translated into practice. I recruited Erin Nicheols (4th grade) and Brandon Graves (5th grade) of Wheatley Elementary. Both teachers had great rapport with Sarah, and were enthusiastic about our meeting on a cold Saturday morning at a local restaurant.

Procuring the largest table in the place, Sarah immediately passed out folders to each of us, filled with her stem based resources. Though numerous patrons filed in and out of the restaurant, Brandon, Erin and I remained fixed on Sarah as she eloquently elaborated how to weave thinking stems into daily instruction.

At the completion of our three hour meeting, Erin and Brandon left revitalized and eager to implement Sarah's structure into their classrooms. Since that meeting, both teachers have embedded thinking stems into their everyday practice. Brandon has been using the stems as talking prompts for collaborative discussion within his class, while Erin has created stems on character traits to help students describe characters using specific details. They will be presenting their experience to the Wheatley Elementary staff in January.

I feel honored to have had the opportunity to collaborate with Sarah. Her teachings have permeated the instructional fabric of Wheatley Elementary and will help support and propel students into new realms of thinking and learning. For this I am forever thankful. I'd also like to thank Beth Fuller, Erin Nicheols, Brandon Graves, and my administrative team for their support. I'm not sure what avenue I'll venture down next, but I look forward to seeing where Thinking Stems 2.0 carries me in the future.

If you are interested in learning more about this strategy, Sarah and Beth will be presenting at Louisville Writing Project Mini-Conference Saturday January 18, from 1:10-2:30.



An example of thinking

Vocabulary in CTE: Choose Your Words Carefully

[Teresa Rogers](#) is a KDE literacy consultant. Rogers has taught nursing, health sciences, elementary reading and writing, and high school English. In the February 2013 issue, Rogers began a series on literacy in career and technical education (CTE). She continues here with that series. For more information, visit her [Literacy in Career and Technical Education website](#).

As teachers, how do you foster development of a rich, content vocabulary without overwhelming your students with endless word lists? Research has shown that the “vocab list on Monday, test on Friday” model yields poor lasting results. So what is a teacher supposed to do? According to the International Reading Association, it’s important to teach vocabulary in context of the current unit of study. Instruction that includes both definitions and the words in context provides markedly greater results than using only one of these (Graves and Sales).

With time being one of your most precious commodities, it is critical that you choose your words carefully. Develop the practice of prioritizing vocabulary, just as you do

with content. Reflect on the full sequence of your career pathway. Students in your preparatory or capstone class will require a greater depth of vocabulary than those in a fundamental or introductory course. They will also have the benefit of rich, repeated exposures over time to develop the deeper understanding required for industry certifications.

Once you considered these questions, use these guidelines as you plan each unit of study.

Must Know Terms are those that:

- You will often in classroom and lab conversations
- Students will see in directions
- Are key to building conceptual understanding the content
- Professionals in your field of study would use to communicate with other professionals

Good to Know Terms are those that:

- Are useful for students to recognize and have a general understanding of

- Students will encounter in the next level course



Nice to Know Terms are those that:

- Students may only recognize or have a superficial understanding of at this level
- Are not required to understand the content in this class

During instruction, it’s OK to use all of these words, but focus classroom discussion on those *must know* terms. Thoughtful attention to vocabulary choice, coupled with the research based best practices that we explored last month, can lead to deeper content understanding and greatly enhance students’ likelihood of graduating career ready.

Resources

Graves, Michael F. and Sales, Gregory C.. “Teaching 50,000 Words. Meeting and Exceeding the Common Core State Standards for Vocabulary.” International Reading Association. Aug. 2013.



Another Excellent Resource: AdLit.org

[AdLit.org](#) is a national multimedia project offering information

and resources to the parents and educators of struggling adolescent readers and writers. AdLit.org is an educational initiative of WETA, the flagship public television and radio station in the nation’s capital, and is funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York and by the Ann B. and Thomas L. Friedman Family Foundation.

AdLit’s [Word Up newsletter](#) is full of great

resources for parents and educators. Below are a few timely articles from recent issues:

- [Common Core Classroom: Writing an Argument](#) – In this classroom video module, you’ll watch 11th grade AP students hone their skills in writing an argument by working to refute or defend a complex prompt provided by their teacher. Find a lesson summary, teaching materials, and listen to the teacher’s reflection on the lesson’s success.

- [Featured Strategy: Paragraph Shrinking](#) – Need more help with writing instruction? Try the Paragraph Shrinking strategy! Paragraph Shrinking allows each student to take turns reading, pausing, and summarizing the main points of each paragraph. Students provide each other with feedback as a way to monitor comprehension.

Visit [AdLit.org](#) to access its various newsletters and other resources.

Technology Critique: Six Ed-Tech Tools for Social Studies Instruction

In a recent [article](#), *eClassroom News* featured reviews of six high-quality apps, tools, and websites that can help teach social studies concepts, courtesy of Common Sense Media and its new [Graphite](#) service — a free database of teacher-written reviews of learning technologies.

The critiques showcased in the *eClassroom News* article include

tools for students in first through twelfth grades and rated on a learning scale of one to five. Among the tools featured in the article were both well and lesser-known resources: Google Earth, iCivics (also previously reviewed in the [November 2013 issue](#) of the *Literacy Link*), Mission U.S.: Flight to Freedom, National Geographic Kids, Sims City, and Stack the Countries.

The reviews include connections to other content areas, related *Common Core State Standards*, as well as required skills (broken down from larger categories like thinking & reasoning, creative and responsibility & ethics into smaller elements). Other useful tidbits include required set-up time and categories titled “Great For/With” that lists uses such as “homework” or “teacher-led

lessons” and student groups such as “advanced learners” or “English language learners”.

Visit [www.graphite.org](#) to search the entire database of reviews by type (apps, console and PC games, websites), subject, grade and price.



Great New Resources from KDE

Vocabulary Webinars

The National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) identified vocabulary as

one of five major components of reading. Its importance to overall school success and, more specifically, to reading comprehension is widely documented (Baker, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 1998; Anderson & Nagy, 1991). KDE consultants are developing a series of webinars to address this critical area.

While these resources are arranged into various content areas, it is important to note that most strategies can be modified and applied across the curriculum. Click [here](#) to access the resources.

Science Connection Newsletter

We recently released the [first edition of the Kentucky Science Connection](#) (SC). The new look and the intent of the SC represent the integration of the three dimensions of the science performance expectations throughout instruction and facilitates collaboration among educators to advance Kentucky science education in the spirit of the Framework and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

Each month the SC will focus on specific science content knowledge, providing instructional strategies and creative ideas that emphasize science content integration. This month's Science Connection contains contributions from a diverse group of dedicated professionals across our state. The experi-

ences and expertise shared by those contributing to the newsletter are invaluable as we roll out the NGSS.

Teacher toolboxes containing science content knowledge, instructional resources and well thought out lessons are housed in your classrooms. You are invited to share your tools with Kentucky colleagues by contributing to the Science Connection. Please see the section of the SC titled "Collaboration and Connections" for further details.

Your questions and suggestions are welcomed as we continue to develop this science resource. Please contact [Christine Duke](#) for more information. The latest issues of all KDE newsletters can be accessed from the [KDE Newsstand](#).

Upcoming Literacy Events Around Kentucky

KCTE/LA Annual Conference

The Kentucky Council of Teachers of English/Language Arts will host its annual conference Feb. 21-22. Entitled "Bridging the Literacy Gap," the 78th anniversary conference will be held at the Embassy Suites Lexington. For more information and to register, visit its [website](#).

Kentucky Reading Project

For the 15th year, the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) is sponsoring the Kentucky Reading Project (KRP), a professional learning initiative for K-5 public school teachers. KRP is a yearlong graduate-level course (taught by literacy faculty at each of the eight state universities) focused on best practices in research-based literacy instruction. The National Center for Family Literacy also provides one day of training in family engagement in literacy.

Teachers who participate in KRP will receive a stipend, professional resources and graduate credit (if desired) upon completion of the course in May 2015. There is no cost to the participant, the school or the district. Information and applications are available on CCLD's [website](#). Contact [Cary Pappas](#) for more information.

LWP Mini-Conference

The Louisville Writing Project (LWP) will have its 2014 Mini-Conference Jan. 18 from 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at the College of Education at the University of Louisville. The

conference will include lessons and strategies for meeting the common core standards (KCAS), P-12, all contents. A special narrative writing strand will feature classroom-tested LDC Modules (Literacy Design Collaborative), funded through NWP's partnership with the Gates Foundation.



Six hours of PD credit is available. Click [here](#) for more information.

Fund for Teachers Grant

Teachers committed to expanding their knowledge and increasing student engagement are invited to apply for 2014 Fund for Teachers grants. These grants allow pre-K-12 teachers to design and pursue summer learning experiences that meet specific learning gaps – theirs and/or their students'. The online application is due by 5 p.m. Jan. 30. Examples of previous fellowships, the scoring rubric and online application are available [here](#).

TALK Conference

On June 16-17 in Louisville, the Teaching

Advocates Leading Kentucky (TALK) will hold its second annual conference.

Are you a classroom teacher, or can team up with one, and want to share your expertise with colleagues across Kentucky? Organizers are seeking presenters for *Let's TALK: Conversations about Effective Teaching and Learning*, a conference for, by and about teachers focusing on the Kentucky Core Academic Standards, especially the Next Generation Science Standards, and the Professional Growth and Effectiveness System (PGES).

Submit a breakout session proposal focusing on one or more of the following to help conference participants:

- * Gain practical classroom strategies
- * Learn to use electronic tools
- * Attain a comfort level with PGES
- * Consider new leadership roles
- * Become familiar with the Kentucky Framework for Teaching

Proposals can be submitted electronically or hard copy and are due by Jan. 31. A classroom teacher must be at least a co-presenter for each session. Details can be found in the [Call for Conference Proposals](#).

Share a conference Save the Date [flyer](#) with your colleagues. If you have questions, please contact Michelle Duke at talk@kea.org or 502.696.8948.

PD 360: Common Core in The Classroom



The [Common Core in the Classroom](#) series from School Improvement Network showcases real-life classrooms across the country in which effective lessons aligned with Common Core standards are being taught. In addition to offering authentic examples of teacher and student engagement, these segments include excerpts from teacher interviews that highlight the lesson's successes and the impact of Common Core standards on student learning.

Common Core in the Classroom – Georgia (Third Delivery)

Description

These newly released video segments feature three segments: three ELA lessons (one Kindergarten lesson and two 1st grade lessons), all filmed in Atlanta, Georgia, and surrounding areas. Each video is accompanied by a guidebook that can be downloaded from the PD 360 platform. These guidebooks contain the featured teacher's lesson plan as well as a viewer response form and discussion prompts that guide viewers to reflect on the lesson and consider what they might apply to their own practice.

Segment Information

Kindergarten: Informational Writing About Oviparous Animals – Ms. Maggie Tompkins, a kindergarten teacher at Shiloh Point Elementary in Cumming, Georgia, guides her students to incorporate facts from research into their informational writing. This lesson is aligned with Common Core ELA standards W.K.2 & 7.

1st Grade: Research and Persuasion for a Classroom Pet – Ms. Stephanie Buquoi, a 1st grade teacher at Shiloh Point Elementary in Cumming, Georgia, engages her students

in a writing project in which they apply elements of research and persuasion to appeal to the manager of a Petco store to donate a pet to their classroom. This lesson aligns with Common Core ELA standards W.1.6-8, RI.1.5, SL.1.1, 3 & 5.

1st Grade: Identifying Facts in a Variety of Informational Texts – Ms. Bridget de Turck and her 1st grade class at Shiloh Point Elementary in Cumming, Georgia, identify factual information about star-nosed moles from a variety of written and visual texts. This lesson is aligned with Common Core ELA standards RI.1.6 & 7.

Common Core in the Classroom – Shelby County (Final Delivery)

Description

The Common Core Standards reflect a spiraling progression that is sequential yet recursive. As students progress, the learning targets do not change essentially, but continue to expand in breadth and depth, allowing teachers and students multiple opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills defined by the standards.

This Common Core in the Classroom program demonstrates the learning progression inherent in the Common Core standards by featuring one classroom segment for an ELA standard at each grade level from K through 12th grade. This final release features ten video segments that represent Math lessons from 8th through 12th grades and ELA lessons from 8th and 10-12th grades.

Segment Information

6th Grade: RL.6.2 - Identifying the Central Idea of a Text – In this segment, Ms. Tabitha Boddie, a 6th grade ELA teacher at Appling

Middle School in Shelby County, Tennessee, guides her students as they identify the central idea and supporting details within a text. The lesson aligns with ELA standard RL.6.2 and additional standard RI.6.2.

8th Grade: RI.8.2 - Finding the Central Idea in a Text about the Hoover Dam – Ms. Joan Gatewood, an 8th grade ELA teacher at Appling Middle School in Shelby County, Tennessee, guides her students as they determine the central idea and supporting details of a text about the Hoover Dam. The lesson aligns with ELA standard RI.8.2.

10th Grade: RI.10.2 - Find and Analyze the Development of a Central Idea in a Speech – Ms. Kim Douglas, a 10th grade ELA teacher at Germantown High School in Shelby County, Tennessee, leads her students to analyze the development of a central idea in a historical speech. The lesson aligns with ELA standards RI.10.2 and additional standard SL.10.1.

11th Grade: RI.11.2 - Finding Central Ideas in a Non-Fiction Text – Ms. Megan Johnston, an 11th grade ELA teacher at Collier-Hill High School in Shelby County, Tennessee, engages students in the process of identifying and providing textual support for central themes in a non-fiction text. The lesson aligns with ELA standard RI.11.2.

12th Grade: RI.12.2 - Identify Central Ideas in an Informational Essay – Ms. Christy Reasons and her 12th grade ELA class at Germantown High School in Shelby County, Tennessee, engage with a complex informational text to determine two or more central ideas and deduce the author's intent.



PBS Learning Media's "Inspiring Middle School Literacy"

PBS Learning Media features a great resource entitled "[Inspiring Middle School Literacy](#)". These online self-paced lessons for blended learning are designed to enhance the literacy skills of struggling readers in grades 5–8. Each uses videos, interactive activities, note taking, reading, and writing to present students with an engaging science, social

studies, mathematics, or English language arts topic. Each lesson addresses a range of literacy strategies, which are listed in the accompanying teacher's guide.

In a recent webinar, "[Reading + Content: Literacy Resources for Grades 5-8](#)" co-presenter Cynthia Warner from Kentucky Educational Television (KET) delved deeply into this resource. Highlights include:

- Introduction to [PBS Learn-](#)

ingMedia

- Deep dive into the [Inspiring Middle School Literacy](#) Collection
- A series of cross-curricular Common Core aligned lessons
- [One minute introduction](#) to the literacy lessons
- Apply to the PBS Learning-Media Digital Innovator Program [here](#)

The Read, Watch, Interact! webinar series continues next year:

- "[Teach Math and Literacy Seamlessly](#)" on 1/14/14
- "[Flipped Lit](#)" on 2/25/14

View the webinar [here](#). [Like WGBH on Facebook](#) and [follow them on Twitter](#) for even more media-based resources, and to connect with other educators.

Help

Your contributions of ideas and lessons that work are welcome. E-mail mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov to submit. Your submissions may be included in the *Literacy Link* to help connect teachers across the state by sharing ideas, insights and best practices.

Access this and past *Literacy Links* on KDE's website: [Click Here](#)



If you have questions or concerns, we want to help. Contact:

- Cindy Parker – Literacy Coordinator – cindy.parker@education.ky.gov
- Kelly Clark – Literacy Consultant – kelly.clark@education.ky.gov
- Jackie Rogers – Literacy Consultant – jackie.rogers@education.ky.gov
- Teresa Rogers – Literacy Consultant – teresa.rogers@education.ky.gov
- Pamela Wininger – Literacy Consultant – pamela.wininger@education.ky.gov
- MK Overstreet – Literacy Consultant – mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov
- Kathy Mansfield– Library Media/Textbooks Consultant – kathy.mansfield@education.ky.gov



Feedback from the Field

Your feedback helps us to tailor the Link to best meet the needs of teachers. Tell us how you're using it. Tell us what you want to see more or less of. We want to hear from you! E-mail [MK Overstreet](mailto:MK.Overstreet).

"I just wanted to take a moment and tell you how valuable the Kentucky

Literacy Link Newsletter is. I use it constantly with the five KTIP interns I have. I also share information with districts with whom we do grants, etc. This is one of those "KEY READ-INGS" I treasure each month. Thank you!"

–Eve P.

"I love your grinchy story! Thanks for sharing. I agree we need to be the change we want to see!"

–Melanie H.



Additional Reading and Other Resources

- There are many excellent educational blogs on the world wide web. Among those is one by New York reading specialist Kristin Riley. Check out her [post on non-fiction text structures](#).
- All about Kentucky in one place: PBS LearningMedia has published its [Kentucky in the Classroom](#) collection within PBS LearningMedia. This is where you will find all cross-curricular resources (videos, interactives, etc.) pertaining to Kentucky. PBS LearningMedia is one of three repositories in [KET EncycloMedia](#).
- The [Center on Instruction](#) has just released [3 new online courses](#). Each course consists of four self-paced modules and is designed for state department of education staff, technical assistance providers, instructional specialists, and special education teachers. To access any of the courses, visit [RMC Educator's Academy](#) and create a free account. Topics include research-based guidance on academic literacy instruction in the content areas and guidance for intensifying instruction in reading and mathematics for students with significant learning difficulties or disabilities in kindergarten through grade 12.
- [How Does Writing Affect Your Brain \(Infographic\)](#)
- [Tools for Ambitious Science Teaching](#) include resources and guides that will help you start on ambitious teaching and help you think about how to work with the Next Generation Science Standards.
- Skillful questioning is a characteristic of highly effective teaching. In this [video](#) from the [Teaching Channel](#), high school teacher Monica Baines uses questioning "as a means of discovery" and "to scaffold understanding".
- This month's Content Area Literacy Task Force (CALTF) [newsletter](#) features digital literacy ideas brought to you by the CALTF team. They would love to know how you use digital literacy in your classroom. Share with them during this month's Twitter-Chat on January 7th from 6-7 EDT. Follow #CALTF to join in the conversation. Email [Margaret Brewer](#) to be added to the distribution list. If you are looking for past issues, these can be found at <http://www.ekuwritingproject.org/>.
- Don't make these mistakes with flipped learning—eSchool News warns against repackaging poor teaching practices in this [article](#).
- [Resources](#) for Writing IEPs Aligned to Common-Core Standards from *Education Week*
- [Letters About Literature](#) (LAL) is a reading and writing contest for students in grades 4-12. Students are asked to read a book, poem or speech and write to that author (living or dead) about how the book affected them personally. Letters are judged on state and national levels. Entries must be postmarked by Jan. 10, 2014. Click [here](#) for the LAL teacher's guide. Read previous national-winning entries [here](#). Read our state winners in the [May 2013 Literacy Link](#). Click [here](#) for rules and guidelines.

